

Senior Thesis Rubric: Department of Sociology

These guidelines list the components of a senior thesis in sociology, and the criteria sociology faculty consider in assessing each.

	Not yet competent	Partially competent	Competent	Exemplary
Research question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research question not evident or not relevant • Social significance not identified or not relevant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research question evident • Social or sociological significance identified 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear research question explicitly evident • Social and/or sociological significance identified persuasively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear research question explicitly evident • Developed with sophistication in relation to both social and sociological significance
Literature review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature review is superficial and/or inaccurate • Does not engage with the appropriate fields • Does not relate to the research question 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature review is theoretically and empirically informed • Synthesis is evident at basic level with room for greater cohesion and depth • Relates to and justifies the research question 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature review is theoretically and empirically informed, and systematic • Strong synthesis and analysis of literature • Relates to and justifies the research question 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature review is theoretically and empirically informed, systematic and cohesive • Well-structured and shows excellent synthesis and analysis/ argument • Frames and justifies the research question with depth and sophistication
Empirical evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data irrelevant to research question or too limited to answer it • Methods do not speak to the question • Data analysis not accurate or comprehensive • Presented poorly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modest amount of data somewhat answers research question • Methods for data collection are adequate • Data analysis not fully accurate or systematic • Presented adequately 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate amount of data answers research question • Methods for data collection are appropriate and well justified • Data analysis is accurate • Well presented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive and high quality data convincingly answers the research question • Methods for data collection are appropriate, well justified, and sophisticated • Data analysis is accurate and sophisticated • Presented with excellence
Argument	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No clear argument offered • Not connected to the literature review and/or the evidence presented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argument is offered with room for greater clarity • Somewhat connected to the literature review and the evidence presented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argument is clear • Connected to the literature review and the evidence presented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argument clearly stated and sophisticated • Carefully & systematically drawn from literature review and evidence presented
Writing mechanics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spelling, grammar and formatting errors impede readability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some spelling, grammar and formatting errors but readability still adequate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Few spelling or grammatical errors and formatting is appropriate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No spelling, grammatical, or formatting errors • Prose is advanced
Writing organization and clarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language and style impede meaning due to errors, lack of clarity, or lack of alignment to intended audience • Structure and organization not adequately clear, or not adequately connected to argument and evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language and style communicate meaning to intended audience adequately • Structure and organization adequately connected to argument and evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language and style communicate meaning to intended audience effectively • Structure and organization supports argument and evidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language and style communicate meaning to intended audience with clarity and fluency • Structure and organization enhances argument and evidence
Academic integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Violation of college policies (plagiarism or substantial misuse of sources) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some sources cited fully and carefully • Significant errors in ASA Style in-text and/or in references 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost all sources cited fully and carefully • Minor or very infrequent errors in ASA Style in-text and/or in references 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All sources cited fully and carefully • ASA Style used without error, in-text and references
Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not set, adjust, and meet deadlines • Consistently misses appointments • Does not incorporate feedback • Lacks initiative and independence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets, adjusts, and meets deadlines mostly • Attends or communicates about most appointments • Incorporates feedback with prompting • Shows modest independence and initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets, adjusts, and meets deadlines consistently • Attends appointments except when not needed or for specific, communicated reasons • Incorporates feedback adequately and with independence and initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets, adjusts, and meets deadlines consistently • Attends appointments except when not needed or for specific, communicated reasons and uses time with advisor effectively • Incorporates feedback with depth, thoughtfulness, independence and initiative • Overall project executed with especially strong independence and initiative